

AN ADDRESS
TO
CHRISTIAN TEACHERS,
ON THE
IMPORTANCE AND MEANS
OF AN
INCREASE IN THE NUMBER
OF
GOSPEL MINISTERS.

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AN ADDRESS

TO CHRISTIAN TEACHERS.

FROM every side the complaint is heard, that the existing ministry is insufficient to meet the demand of the times. The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few. The country is large, and perpetually increasing; the population of the old states is augmented in a fearful ratio; and new states and territories are opening their resources, in all the mighty West, and even beyond the Rocky Mountains, and the Sierra Nevada. The simple but alarming truth is, that the ministers now in the field are altogether unequal to the present necessity; and the rate of increase is such as gives little hope of future supply. Without attempting any colours of rhetoric, our statement is laid before you, that we must have more ministers of the gospel, or our cause must go backward.

This undeniable posture of our affairs would be less formidable, if large numbers of our young men were seen to be seeking the ministry. Such however is not the case. Without undertaking to account for it, the fact stares us in the face, that the Church cannot procure as many suitable candidates as she stands ready to support and educate. There are colleges in which, among hundreds, not one is known to be looking to the sacred office in our communion. Young men of promise are aspiring to other professions in great numbers, including many who make public acknowledgment of their faith in Christ. Sons of the church, descended from godly parents, baptized in their infancy, and dedicated

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to God, are preferring worldly callings, instead of coming up "to the help of the Lord against the mighty." From among the world, a smaller proportion than in some former years is brought into the ranks of holy warfare. This unvarnished statement of incontrovertible facts gives unfavourable augury for the times that are coming.

While this aspect of our affairs ought to arouse every pious heart to labour and pray for the outpouring of the Spirit, and the widespread revival of religion in general, it ought also to lead us to renewed exertions in particular. No means should be left untried to increase the number of our ministers. No class of persons is exempt from this obligation, which weighs with special force on ministers, elders and parents. But to what class can we turn with more lively hope than to those who are engaged in the instruction of youth? In their hands, and that by thousands, are the very persons from whom the levy must be made for the recruiting of our wasted forces. To teachers, then, of every class, who love the Lord Jesus, and more particularly to those who are attached to our own doctrines and order, we address this familiar but earnest plea.

You are engaged, beloved brethren, in an arduous and responsible work, which tries your gifts and your patience, and which too often meets but poor requital in any worldly sense. Our main end would be gained, if we could engage your assent to the principle, that in all these toils and self-denials you should regard yourselves as labouring primarily and directly for the Lord Jesus Christ. This would almost ensure the increased ministry which we need. If every instructor were urging forward his daily efforts with this intention, our point would already be gained. It is the absence in many of this high Christian motive which results in the present sterility of our schools, hundreds of which may be visited before you encounter one youth who is sighing for the work of the Lord. This ought not to be the case in a Protestant land, where the great Reformation principle should be universally prevalent, that schools are the nurseries of the Church. And it will not be the case, in a day when teachers awake to a sense of their accountability and their privilege, and employ the means which are abundantly placed in their hands. For as there is obviously no class of persons who have the youth of this generation so fully under their moulding influence, so there is

none so happily situated for educating talent and instilling principle, and holding up motive, and fostering desire with regard to the ministerial work. Within certain limits, the character of teachers will determine the character of children; in other words, the character of the next generation. If Christian preceptors never suggest the importance of this work, and never foster the gifts which it demands, it is no marvel if thousands of youth pass through schools and colleges with purely secular aims and plans, and if the ministry be to a certain extent deserted.

Let this preliminary topic be seriously laid to heart by Christian teachers. Open your minds, respected brethren, to the expostulation of love. Submit your daily routine of action, and your ruling principles as instructors, to a faithful scrutiny. Observe how far you pursue your calling with an eye to Christ's cause and to the great award. You have professedly made an unreserved surrender of your all to the Lord Jesus Christ. You will not for a moment claim to exempt your chosen employment from this dedication. The honourable business of your lives is undertaken in subservience to the kingdom of God; and you own the obligation of making all your acts tend to the promotion of the gospel work. You are not your own, but are bought with a price. In other words, you are to regard yourselves in all the business of instruction as teaching for Christ. Let this find its place among your governing maxims, and our argument has a fulcrum which cannot be shaken.

From what has preceded, it is but a step to the further consideration, that *Christian teachers have a great work before them in giving increase to the number of our ministers.* You have seen the necessity for such increase; we pray you to consider your own possible agency in supplying it. You have under your daily charge, by tens, by scores, or taking years together by hundreds, a body of young persons. Among these are children of admirable gifts, to whose bright faces you are wont to turn for refreshment and hope amidst annoyances and disappointments. What we would seriously press on your consideration, is the duty of seeking to bring some of these into training for the ministry. If this single truth were sunk into every teacher's heart; if this single duty were everywhere performed, we might fairly look upon the battle as won. If even every school in our Presbyterian territory contained one candidate for the ministry, it

would give a promise like the universal blossoming of our orchards in the spring. We are persuaded that this duty has failed to reach the minds of teachers, or to fix their attention in any due proportion to its importance. Could the wants of the world, and the necessity for gospel labour, break upon your minds with half their real light, you would bless God for putting you into an office where you may so immediately and powerfully contribute to this supply. No men in the world, not excepting parents, or even ministers, can do more in training up preachers for the country than those who in every part of the land are engaged in teaching.

It scarcely needs enlarged remark, to show that the first duty of an instructor, in this affair, regards such scholars as give some evidence of piety. Not every sincerely religious boy is fit for the work. It is no part of a teacher's duty to aid in thrusting drones or dunces into the Lord's vineyard. There are cases in which even the ardent desires of worthy but ungifted young men are to be repressed; though it is a point where great discrimination is needed. But if you have under your charge those who make a credible profession of their faith, and at the same time are discreet and apt at learning, these, *these* are the precious jewels which should be brought into the sanctuary, and *you*, brethren, are the very persons to bring them in. On this interesting point some details may be expected in the sequel; let a statement of the general duty suffice here.

Your regards, however, need not be confined to those who are already converted. You have other pupils of equal or greater promise, whom God may yet convert, and from whom he may call ministers of the word. We cannot go too far in training the universal talent of our youth. We know not whom the Lord may call. It is your privilege to labour incessantly for the salvation of your beloved charge. Providence has greatly multiplied instances of general awakening in Christian schools. In your own experience, it is to be hoped, you have seen some such fruit; if not, it is time to pray for it and to strive after it. If you conduct all your labours as the servants of Christ, counting it your highest honour to be instrumental in promoting his kingdom, you will look on every scholar as one who may yet do service in the building of the house of the Lord.

The duty, then, which with affectionate faithfulness we would urge upon all instructors, through the length and

breadth of the land, is that of reckoning all other aims subordinate to that of honouring *Christ* by training youth to his glory, in the service of his Church, and especially in the ministry of reconciliation.

Having thus stated in general terms the duty of Christian teachers, we shall proceed to suggest some motives which may impel to the performance of it.

MOTIVES.

(1.) *The prospect of labouring so directly for THE INCREASE OF THE MINISTRY should be inspiring to every Christian heart.* Let us limit our view for a little to the question of *number*. How may we hope to add to the number of ministers? In no way, we are convinced, so reasonably as by engaging pious teachers to renew their covenant with Christ, by dedicating afresh their powers, their time, their teaching, and their scholars. The great matter is to reach the minds of our youth, and to persuade them, on scriptural grounds, to prepare for the work of preaching. In this way a blessed and peaceful conscription may be made for the Lord of hosts. Out of this multitude some will be enlisted, if the means be used. But who is to go to these scattered groups on the important errand? You, brethren, who have them at your very doors! There is no method half so promising. You already constitute a corps of missionaries in behalf of church-education. There need not be a single specific appointment for this end. Vastly better is this than any separate detachment of men for the purpose. Suppose, for example, we should try to effect the same by particular agents. It would remove these from other labours; it would be expensive; it would be difficult to obtain the men; any number whom we could secure would be unable to reach all our schools, or to reach them oftener than once in several years; and even if they could reach them, with how much less impression would they come to them than the well known and affectionate instructor! In the teachers now in the field we have a body of men this moment on the ground, in immediate proximity with the youth contemplated, and able to operate upon them not once a year, but every day. This is a point too obvious to be mistaken, but too important to be omitted; the existing

teachers of our schools constitute an agency prepared to enter on this work without delay.

Statistics are wanting, to show how many of the instructors within our congregations are communicants in the Presbyterian Church. Some observation in different states encourages us to believe that the number is far greater than is thought by most. In the kind providence of God pious young men, rather than others, are disposed to engage in the work of teaching. Some large congregations have within their bounds five or six schools, and there is scarcely one which cannot claim a single school. It will be a very moderate basis of computation to reckon one school for every church, and to consider one in three of the teachers as professing faith in Christ. We believe this to be much below the truth. But even this gives us eight hundred and sixty-five pious teachers. Add private tutors and the principals and professors of colleges and high schools, and we may safely claim a thousand agents in the field. One recruit annually from each of these would give us a thousand candidates every year. The proportion may seem too large; but it would not be so, if teachers were plying this work with zeal and prayer. Then we are to consider, that some of these institutions instead of being handfuls, rate their scholars at fifty, a hundred, and even two hundred; and that in the course of any year, Divine grace is wont to shed forth converting influences on schools and colleges perhaps more liberally than on any communities, bringing in great numbers at once to the communion of the church. By proper instructions and persuasions the teachers of the land may do more than all other persons to place promising youth in the path which leads to the ministry. All that is wanting is a just view of the subject, and proper feeling with regard to it. And your personal attention to this momentous duty in the course of your daily labours, is what we would earnestly endeavour to secure.

(II.) *Instructors of youth may thus aid in furnishing a ministry of the right character.* That is to say, they may contribute not only to quantity but to quality. Our ministers will be better ministers for such labours. We cannot begin too early to form the mind of the future preacher. If suitable in other respects, the sooner a young man begins to regard the work of proclaiming Christ the

better. It is true that many of our most estimable pastors and missionaries came late to the work, and a still larger number did not recognise their vocation until their studies were somewhat advanced; but these will be the very first to acknowledge how much better it would have been if they had made this dedication of their powers at an earlier date. They would then have taken every step and made every attainment, with a direct view to that great and glorious work; and this, in ordinary circumstances, would have saved them from many losses, and conferred a hallowing influence on their studies and employments. Teachers are the very persons to do most in giving this determination to the character. They gain the earliest glimpses of mind and heart; they are perpetually with their juvenile charge; they possess their confidence, and can lay the plastic hand upon their manners and habits. Surely it cannot be a matter of indifference, that those who are to minister in holy things should from the earliest years be under the tuition of men who tremble for the ark of God.

It is not meant that means should be used by teachers to entrap boys into premature decisions. This it is possible to do, to the great detriment of the individuals and the church. There are many reasons for thinking that hasty pledges should be avoided, and that a purpose to enter the ministry should be left to that gradual and healthful growth which belongs to so momentous a determination. But it is nevertheless the privilege of the teacher to hold out before his scholars all evangelical inducements to be preachers of the gospel. Some of these, even in early youth, will secretly form the purpose to serve Christ. Now what we maintain is, that all such will greatly profit by being under the care of instructors who rejoice in this kind of dedication; and under such instructors the number of these youth will be most likely to increase. If in the daily employments of your school-room or your class, your eye is constantly looking abroad to espy some who may be useful ministers, and if you place the glory of Christ above all the other rewards of your profession, then it is impossible that there should not be an influence going forth to all under your charge, which will make itself known in those among them who shall actually preach the word; and this is a motive to the work we recommend.

(III.) *Faithful teachers will aid in raising up men to serve the church in other labours than those of the ministry.* All good men are not ministers, nor is it desirable that they should be. We need good elders, deacons, Sabbath-school superintendents and instructors; we need presidents, professors and principals; physicians, lawyers, judges, farmers and merchants; in short there is no sort of earthly business in which we do not require more educated and holy men. Christian instructors may be assured, therefore, even if in many cases they fail to introduce men into the ministry, that their labours are not in vain in the Lord. It may well animate the mind of many an humble believer, amidst the cares and disquietudes of his school, that he is helping to rear a generation who shall serve the Lord, and that those who pass from under his hands will be everywhere the upholders of sound order, temperance, truth and piety.

(IV.) *The labours of instruction conducted on these principles will tend to save the souls of many pupils.* Here is a motive which might well make every pious heart throb with anticipation. Suppose you should gain no one for the ministry; suppose even that your pupils should all die before manhood; yet if you are the means of introducing them to heaven—what a blessedness! Now the very same method of life and line of instruction which promises the advantages already mentioned, promises also this. Enter on the work of teaching, and pursue it with a single eye to Christ's glory, toiling and enduring for him, and regarding every youth placed under your guardianship as a jewel which may adorn his crown, and the likelihood is great that you will see constant tokens of the Divine presence, in your school. Hundreds are now living, and thousands are in heaven, who could, under God, ascribe their awakening or their conversion to the faithful instructions which they received in school, or from their preceptors. The history of the Reformed Churches is full of such pious instructors, from the days of Calvin's schoolmaster, MATURINUS CORDERIUS, whose Colloquies were once read by every Latin scholar. This is a topic of incalculable moment, even independently of the main argument which now engages us. It comes home to the conscience and affections of every teacher. There can be no greater object held before you in your pro-

fession, than the saving of souls; and for this you have advantages possessed by few others.

(V.) *These views of duty add dignity to the teacher's office.* The business of instruction may be conducted in two very different ways. On one hand, it may be a low, unhonoured, almost mechanical routine, pursued for the sole purpose of gaining a livelihood; on the other hand, it may be one of the noblest functions discharged by a human being. To confer on it this glory, which some may deem extravagant, all that is necessary is that it be viewed as the training of immortal souls, and as subsidiary to the publication of gospel truth. It is the gospel which dignifies the school. This was the aspect in which the Reformers beheld the subject. Thus it was in Scotland, where the same acts which made provision for preaching made provision for teaching; where every parish church was accompanied with a parish school, both being equally under the supervision of the Presbytery. To both preacher and teacher belonged what in ecclesiastical phrase was called "the cure of souls." The complaint is often made, and not without justice, that due honour is not conceded to faithful and laborious instructors. But here is "honour that cometh from God alone," and which will not be disregarded by those who prefer heavenly to earthly rewards.

(VI.) *High Christian views make the work of instruction delightful.* The teacher's office is not a sinecure. His labours have little intermission, and are sometimes such as put his utmost patience to the test. Inculcation of rudiments, with perpetual iteration, is itself irksome; to this must be added the incapacity, or idleness, or frowardness of children; and not unfrequently ignorance, ill-nature, or ingratitude on the part of parents. Unless a teacher is buoyed up by some active principle, he will find his days heavy and almost intolerable. We know, indeed, that the work of teaching affords of itself some sources of pleasure to generous minds, who rejoice in watching the development of youthful intellect and morals. Yet this is trifling gratification when compared with that which springs from connecting every part of the daily lessons with the service of Christ, and with the wonders of eternity.

He who feels that in his humble measure he is furthering

the salvation of mankind, by adding to the number and the qualifications of the ministry, and by rearing up men who can be useful in other departments of the Church, has a confidence which casts its beams over all the dull and leaden prospect of the scholastic field. Here a most important principle of our nature comes into play, namely, that *Love sweetens all labour*. We observe it in the mother, suffering and serving beside her babe; the daughter, watching over the decrepitude of her parent; and the wife, making sacrifice of youth, health and refreshment for her husband. Love is equally operative in the higher sphere of religion. When terminating on the Lord Jesus Christ, it causes every service, however menial in itself, to be welcome. The otherwise intolerable anxieties and fatigues of a school will be alleviated by the reference of every act to the Lord whom we serve.

(VII.) *Such teaching will meet with its REWARD.* In this world no profession is less generously remunerated than that of the teacher. Even those parents who settle their dues sometimes give the pittance grudgingly. It is much better to look beyond the present life, to that recompense which shall take place at the resurrection of the just. Here we might easily be tempted to wander beyond the just limits of our present subject, and treat of the blessedness which will be granted to those who have spent a lifetime in training up children for God, and of the exquisite joys attendant upon meeting those in heaven whom they had instructed upon earth. But we must leave this to your private meditations. In this, as in all other pursuits, you will gain a new stimulus, and a happier elevation, by bringing in the power of a heavenly motive; and will find many an hour of sloth quickened, many an impatient murmur hushed, and many a sorrow assuaged, by looking forward to the day of Christ's coming.

After this survey of the motives to the work, it is not, we trust, too much to believe that you will readily attend to some hints as to the way in which it may be performed.

MEANS.

Bearing in mind that the general duty here urged as incumbent on the teachers of youth, is to use all means to re-

inforce the Christian ministry, we shall endeavour to point out what these means are; and for the sake of brevity as well as clearness, we beg leave to do this chiefly in the way of direct address. At the same time we would seek to avoid all that is harsh or dictatorial, using that freedom which belongs to respectful and affectionate entreaty. To such of our brethren, then, as are engaged in this responsible work, we offer the following suggestions, by no means novel, how much soever they may have been neglected in practice.

(I.) **SEEK OUT YOUTH WHOSE GIFTS PROMISE USEFULNESS IN THE MINISTRY.** Your situation is eminently favourable for this. From year to year numbers pass under your observation, and in circumstances which facilitate correct judgment. Capacity and genius are often latent; they will be diligently sought out by the wise teacher. Among your pupils there are certainly some whose aptitude and talent rise above the common mark; it is your delight to instruct them, and you sometimes forecast their future usefulness and distinction. Let the question daily present itself, Who among these are likely to be preachers of the gospel? Attention will of course be due, in the first place, to any who by Divine grace are already numbered among the Lord's people. Happy is that preceptor (and through infinite mercy there are many such) who can look over his interesting group of boys, and discern several who offer evidence of a renewed mind! It will quicken your exertions on their behalf, to consider that you may be training those whom God may largely own in the conversion of souls. It will guide you in all your management of their case, and will suggest many a topic of instruction and remark. You will, in this view of the subject, watch over their habits and progress with redoubled solicitude, and will seize every occasion to apply those gentle but effectual touches that may lead them into a work which you so much desire for them. A pious professor, or other teacher, is scarcely fulfilling his duty, who allows himself to remain ignorant of the temper, talents, and bias of youthful brethren consigned to his charge, or who allows them to remain ignorant of his ardent wishes that they should consecrate themselves to the work of the Redeemer. Is it not worthy of being considered, whether you have not already been delinquent in this particular?

But there is another class of pupils on whom your eye will daily fall. They have quickness of parts, are docile and proficient; but as yet they are unconverted. In regard to these your duty is twofold. First, you are called upon, as before stated, to labour unceasingly for their conversion; and, secondly, you are to employ special diligence in giving them all the discipline of the soundest education, in the hope that if not immediately, yet at some future day, God may subdue them to himself and make them "able ministers of the New Testament." They are therefore not excluded from that observation, search and care, which has for its object the increase of the ministry. It will be a happier day for our church, when every instructor shall have his list of beloved youth, every one of whom gives tokens of usefulness in preaching the everlasting gospel.

(II.) RENDER ALL THE AID IN YOUR POWER TO THOSE WHO ARE EXPECTING TO BECOME MINISTERS. Here the field of usefulness is wide, and we rejoice to know that such aid has been afforded by none more generously than by professional teachers. Ever since there was a Christian ministry on earth, pious instructors, loving the cause of the Redeemer, have been forward to give a helping hand to indigent boys of piety and promise. They have done this by lowering their little fees, or by remitting them altogether; in many cases they have furnished them with books; and sometimes they have undertaken their entire support. Where this has been beyond their slender means, they have made interest with benevolent persons of wealth. All these methods are recommended to your attention. It is generally to public teachers that we must look for the discovery of such cases; it is safer so to do, than to be governed by the importunities of the young men themselves. Instructors could be named, who, through a large part of their lives, have never been without some young men dependent on their bounty; and it is delightful to consider how large a number of successful ministers have thus been lifted over obstacles in their way to the sacred office, which otherwise would have been insurmountable. Important as this point is, there is really no one which it seems more superfluous to urge.

(III.) MAKE THE CHARACTER OF YOUR PUPILS A CONSTANT STUDY. It is only in this way that you can learn

who among them are deserving of special care, and who are in possession of the requisite talents. And even after you have determined that such and such persons bid fair to do the church service, your work of discrimination is not ended. There are wide differences even among pious youth, in discipline, habit and disposition. One of the great advantages of the method which we are recommending, is that it applies the influences at the earliest moment, and when the subject is most malleable and ductile. There are even in renewed minds obliquities of temper, which would in maturity unfit for ministerial work, but which, early taken into the forming hand of a wise and dextrous preceptor, may be rectified. There are gross defects in knowledge, which may by seasonable assiduity be fully supplied. There are negligences of method and unhappy customs which may be safely removed; while, in regard to personal piety, there are a thousand healthful lessons to be gained from Christian tuition. But none of these things can be done without a sedulous and penetrating study of individual character. If such caution is observed in the office of the Inspector-General, with regard to all recruits for our army, extending to every quality of constitution and limb, how much more should we be vigilant as to the qualifications of those who aspire to be ministers of the gospel.

(IV.) IN ALL YOUR INSTRUCTIONS GIVE THE FIRST PLACE TO RELIGION. Then, if you are true Christians, your heart and your work will go together all the day long. Your rule is, "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness." How is it possible for a teacher to acquit himself of a sort of religious treason, who dwells all his year among the heathen classics, and the merest secularities of this perishing life, and never breathes to his pupils a syllable as to the way in which they should go? Many of them, it is probable, come from households which are negligent, irreligious, erroneous, heretical, or even infidel. O, respected brother, how great is your privilege! You may introduce these souls to Christ and thus pluck them as brands out of the burning. Perhaps it is the only way in which some of them are likely to arrive at the knowledge of the truth.

Do not content yourself with a low standard of religious training. The Bible is read in your school; it is well;

your school would be heathenish if it were not; but this is not enough. The exercises are opened and closed with prayer; it is well; but you are called to more than this; and you will do more if you keep Christ and the judgment continually in view. No week should pass without a regular lesson in the Scriptures, accompanied with remarks which may reach the conscience and affections of your pupils. Indeed, we know no reason why a short exercise of this kind might not form a part of every day's work. In the old Presbyterian schools the Shorter Catechism was regularly taught. Where no objection is made, this practice should be diligently kept up. At all events, that incomparable formulary may be learned by all children and youth whose parents do not express some disapproval.

Not only religious instruction, but a religious spirit, should reign in your school. This will depend on the life of piety in your own soul. Your example, as to words, demeanour, and temper, will manifest this spirit, and have its influence on the very youngest of your scholars. Pious parents will send their beloved children to your school, as into a holy atmosphere, with an humble confidence that they shall there be enjoying the means of grace every day. The morals of your literary household will be secured upon the highest evangelical motives. Discipline will become a gentle process, seldom demanding the rigors of threatening or punishment. And you will probably have your reward in seeing a number growing up to dedicate themselves to the labour of gospel love.

(V.) KEEP THE SUBJECT OF THE MINISTRY BEFORE YOUR OWN MIND AND THE MINDS OF YOUR PUPILS. After all that has been said, this may at first seem superfluous. But you will remember, that a truth may be believed, and may even be considered important, and yet may fail to dwell upon the mind distinctly, constantly, and with the cogency of a practical motive. What we would press upon you, is the habit of viewing all your instructions as subservient to the work of the Lord; and accounting it the most desirable fruit of your teaching to prepare ministers to go before the face of the Lord. The more deeply this sinks into your mind, the more direct and operative will be your endeavours to attain the object. You will then "run, not as uncertainly;" you will fight "not as one that beateth the air."

And while you charge home these considerations on yourself, you will embrace every opportunity of laying them before your pupils; by casual hints and more formal discourses; by reading, extract, and anecdote; by rehearsing the wants of the world, the excellency of ministerial work, and the glory of gospel grace. For it is by such considerations that persons, young or old, are induced to follow Christ and preach the gospel; and when schools abound with such lessons, churches will abound with ministers.

(VI.) CONVERSE WITH YOUR PUPILS ON THIS SUBJECT. Of all the influences which an instructor exerts on learners, perhaps the most important is one which many neglect; it is private conversation out of school hours. A word fitly spoken falls with weight on the individual ear. It reaches further than the general address or lecture. By such conferences you are enabled, as before recommended, to study character and to guide inclination. Who knows but among the very youth who now look up to you for information, there may be one who has secret longings to know Christ's will, and who will be unspeakably relieved and benefited by your timely counsel? You may draw forth the diffident spirit, at some happy moment, and fix determinations that are never to be moved. As this means of influence is known to have a great bearing on the conversion of the soul, it is likewise powerful in respect to the choice of a profession. A teacher would do well, who should allow no day to pass without close, faithful and affectionate personal conversation with some one of his charge.

(VII.) LET THIS SUBJECT ENTER INTO YOUR PRAYERS, WITH AND FOR YOUR PUPILS. "Pray ye," says our blessed Master, in connection with this very matter, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." Matt. ix. 37. It is to be remarked, that the precise thing which our Saviour enjoins upon us in view of the whitening fields is *to pray*. If this is incumbent on believers in general, how peculiarly incumbent is it on those who spend the greater part of their days in the company of the very persons who might take the sickle and gather the golden sheaves. Conscientious teachers pray with their scholars. We mean something more than a cold, hurried, formal service, often little else

than a notice that school is opened, or that it is closed. When there is grace in lively exercise, the pious instructor will feel that to be a moment of solemnity and tenderness in which he stands, surrounded by his beloved youth, and tries to lead them upwards in devotion.

At such a time, when you draw near the throne of mercy, let the increase of the ministry come before your remembrance, and earnestly ask of God that he would vouchsafe to take some of those whom he has entrusted to your tuition, and make them heralds of his saving truth. But not only may you offer these intercessions in public. Your closet will witness, that in secret devotion you bear on your hearts those who are submitted to your guardianship. Here, alone with God, you may press the humble claim, for his name's sake, with greater fulness and importunity, entering into particulars, and uttering the very names of those who are already enlightened, and of those for whom you desire this grace. What a change would be wrought in all our ecclesiastical prospects, by this revival of prayer on the part of pious teachers!

(VIII.) LET THE PROSPECT OF SUCH RESULTS LEAD YOU TO THOROUGHNESS IN THE WORK OF INSTRUCTION. A stronger motive could not be presented. Labours of love are not slighted. Regard for Christ affords impulse and solace, and turns wearisome tasks into pleasure. A holy oil will distil upon every wheel of your daily operations, when you look at the possibility of adding new labourers to the harvest-tools. You will aspire to make these labourers as thoroughly furnished to all good works as your diligence can render them. As learning is employed by the Master in his ministry, you will strive to give a training which shall be extensive and thorough; laying deep foundations, making patient advances, using improved methods, applying wise repetition, carrying up the structure with honesty and caution in the details, shunning every slight and superficial device, and despising all vain display; seeing that "ye serve the Lord Christ." And as you know not which it may please God to call, you will dispense these cares to every one within your influence; giving especial and affectionate attention to those who already desire the "good work." Not for a moment will the Christian teacher forget, that his

instructions should be all the more solid and enriching because of his Christianity. The proper application of this principle will have this certain result, that Christian schools will be everywhere seen to be the best schools; and no man will be able to object, that in seeking the prevalence of religious feeling you have made any sacrifice of learned accomplishment. There is no danger that our ministry will be too well educated; and the earlier the stage in which this thorough work is undertaken, the better will be the consequences for posterity.

(IX.) KEEP YOUR EYE ON THOSE PUPILS WHO HAVE PASSED FROM UNDER YOUR IMMEDIATE CARE. The influence of a good teacher is not ended when a young man leaves school. It is almost universally found, that when the little annoyances of discipline are forgotten, the scholar remembers acts of kindness and faithfulness with more tender regard. The authority of such a teacher is sometimes as lasting as life. Follow your pupils with your attention, and counsel, and prayers, into college, and other places of improvement. Watch for tokens of reformation and faith. Maintain such intercourse and correspondence as may be permitted. Add your counsels, on all important subjects, and especially in regard to the work of the ministry. Remember that the period in which most young men decide upon their future calling is that which follows their preparation for college. At such critical moments, a word from the honoured instructor will often suffice to turn the scale. Thus, even if never allowed to preach the gospel yourselves, you may be continually adding faithful men to the number who are making "full proof of their ministry."

In these ways, and in ways like these, it is confidently believed that the instructors of our youth may contribute in a very high degree, to supply that lack of service under which the Church at present so loudly laments.

These remarks will meet the eye of several classes of teachers, who will acknowledge a special relation to their own case. First, *those who are placed over church-schools, parochial, presbyterial, or synodical*, will feel doubly bound to perform the duties recommended; seeing it is the very intent of these institutions to aid in promoting evangelical

truth, in our view of it. They will at the same time enjoy facilities and freedom, unknown to others, for carrying out all our suggestions in their fullest extent. Secondly, *candidates for the ministry*, of whom great numbers are temporarily occupied with instruction, cannot fail to admit the force of the foregoing considerations. Having been themselves so lately in the seat of the learner, having so lately yielded to the claims of Christ's ministry, and having the great and delightful work so nearly in prospect, they must, more than most, be in sympathy with such of their youthful associates as begin to feel these motions stir within them. Thirdly, and above all, *ministers of the gospel*, who have the care of schools, or who instruct in colleges, scarcely need our word of exhortation. We would rather invite them to co-operate in promoting the manifest object of this address. Through them, particularly in their own pastoral charges, the arguments here presented can best find their way to other teachers. While in their own circles of instruction, they may of themselves be endeavouring to increase the number of ministers, they may exercise a happy influence upon all around them who have the care of youth.

The whole subject is respectfully submitted to teachers of every class. May the Lord of the harvest add his blessing to this earnest attempt to increase the efficiency of his Church! And to his name be the glory!

THE END.

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